

Message Text

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ACTION NODS-00

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S E C R E T SECTO 02047

NODIS/CHEROKEE

FOR THE PRESIDENT FROM SECRETARY VANCE

E.O. 11652 GDS
TAGS: PFOR US LE
SUBJECT: MEETINGS WITH LEBANESE LEADERS

1. DURING A FOUR-HOUR STOP-OVER IN BEIRUT TODAY, I HAD
TALKS WITH PRESIDENT SARKIS, PRIME MINISTER AL-HOSS
AND FOREIGN MINISTER BOUTROS. APART FROM THE SUBSTANCE OF OUR
TALKS, THE FACT OF MY VISIT WAS WELCOMED BY THEM AS A DEMONSTRATION
OF OUR CONFIDENCE IN LEBANON'S FUTURE AND OF OUR SUPPORT
FOR THE EFFORTS OF PRESIDENT SARKIS TO REUNIFY THE
COUNTRY IN THE FACE OF CONTINUING SEPARATIST TENDENCIES.
I REAFFIRMED TO THEM PRIVATELY AND IN SPEAKING TO THE
PRESS AFTERWARDS OUR SUPPORT FOR THE TERRITORIAL
INTEGRITY, SOVEREIGNTY AND NATIONAL UNITY OF LEBANON..
I ALSO ANNOUNCED DURING MY VISIT A \$50 MILLION ASSISTANCE
PACKAGE CONSISTING OF FOOD AID, OTHER HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE AND

SOME INITIAL RECONSTRUCTION IN THE HOUSING AND PORT
REHABILITATION ARE AS PUT TOGETHER OUT OF FUNDS ALREADY
APPROPRIATED BY THE CONGRESS. PRESIDENT SARKIS ASKED ME TO
EXTEND HIS WARM APPRECIATION TO YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST AND
SUPPORT.

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2. DURING OUR TALKS, AS AT MY EARLIER STOPS, THE
PALESTINIAN ISSUE LOOMED LARGE. PROGRESS TOWARD A PEACE
SETTLEMENT WHICH WILL RESOLVE THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION IS OF
PARTICULARLY CONCERN TO THE LEBANESE BECAUSE THEY SEE THE
LARGE PALESTINIAN PRESENCE IN LEBANON AS A
CONTINUING SOURCE OF INSTABILITY UNTIL A SOLUTION IS

FOUND. THEY FEEL STRONGLY THAT THE PLO SHOULD BE REPRESENTED AT A RECONVENED GENEVA CONFERENCE.

3. FOREIGN MINISTER BOUTROS IN ADDITION STRESSED THAT LEBANON SHOULD BE INVITED

TO PARTICIPATE AT GENEVA SINCE, WHILE IT HAS NOT TERRITORIAL DISPUTE WITH ISRAEL,; AND HAS NOT PARTICIPATED IN PREVIOUS ARAB-ISRAELI WARS, LEBANON HAS A DIRECT STAKE IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PEACEFUL RELATIONSHIPS IN THE AREA AND IN RESOLUTION OF THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM. I SAID THAT WE WOULD WELCOME LEBANESE PARTICIPATION AND

WHILE THE OTHER PARTICIPANTS WOULD ALSO HAVE TO AGREE I SAW NO REASON WHY THEY WOULD NOT.

4. IN A PRIVATE MEETING WITH PRESIDENT SARKIS, HE DESCRIBED WITH CONSIDERABLE FORCE HIS CONCERN ABOUT THE SITUATION IN SOUTH LEBANON. HE EXPLAINED THE PROBLEMS CAUSED FOR HIM IN ATTEMPTING TO ESTABLISH HIS AUTHORITY THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY AND BRING LAW AND ORDER TO THE SOUTH AS A RESULT OF ISRAEL OPPOSITION TO THE STATIONING OF SYRIAN ARAB SECURITY FORCES IN THAT AREA. HE SAID THEY WERE CLEARLY NO THREAT TO ISRAEL, BUT THAT INABILITY TO DEPLOY THEM IN THE SOUTH WEAKENED HIS OWN POSITION IN THAT COUNTRY. WHILE EXPRESSING UNDERSTANDING OF HIS PROBLEM, I DESCRIBED ISRAEL'S PERCEPTION OF A SITUATION IN WHICH EVEN TOKEN SYRIAN FORCES WERE MOVED CLOSER TO ITS BORDERS. SARKIS SAID HE HOPED TO BE IN A POSITION TO BEGIN TO SEND LEBANESE FORCES SOUTH IN THREE TO SIX MONTHS AND
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MEANWHILE WAS REPLACING THE SYRIANS WITH A BATTALLION OF SUDANESE/SAUDI ARAB SECURITY FORCE PERSONNEL IN THAT AREA. HE URGED THAT WE ASK THE ISRAELIS TO BE PATIENT WHILE HE WORKS THIS PROBLEM OUT. I WILL TAKE THIS MATTER UP WITH THE ISRAELI AMBASSADOR IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING MY RETURN TO WASHINGTON.

5. I WILL BE MEETING THIS EVENING AND TOMORROW MORNING WITH KING HUSSEIN IN AMMAN AND WILL REPORT TO YOU ON THOSE TALKS TOMORROW.
VANCE

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NNN

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